



Rules of the Road

by Joan Bauer

Teacher's Guide

Written By Kathy Sammis

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Synopsis

Chapter 1

Sixteen-year-old Jenna Boller of Chicago is 5' 11" tall, and she feels big, awkward, and lost—except when she's at her after-school and summer job at Gladstone's Shoe Store. Jenna is a superbly gifted shoe salesperson, so at work she feels successful, competent, appreciated by her boss and her customers. One June day, Jenna's mostly absent (two years and seven months this time), alcoholic father cheerfully lurches into the store, embarrassing Jenna horribly in front of elderly and crusty Mrs. Madeline Gladstone, president of Gladstone's Shoes. Jenna deftly gets her father out of the store and sends him off in a taxi.

Chapter 2

Back home at the family's apartment, Jenna tells her fourteen-year-old sister Faith about the encounter with their father. (Their caring mother is at her job as an overnight emergency-room nurse.) Jenna wryly notes for the readers how beautiful and perfectly put together physically Faith is, in stark contrast to Jenna herself. For years, Jenna has protected Faith by falsely reassuring the girl that their father really does care about them and misses them. Jenna's own feelings about Dad are a conflicted mixture of sadness, anger, and yearning. Jenna also desperately misses her Grandma's steady companionship and deep understanding; Grandma now lives in a nursing home, declining with Alzheimer's disease. Whenever Jenna faces a difficult or trying situation, she remembers some pertinent words of advice from Grandma. Then the phone rings: Mrs. Gladstone says she needs a driver

and summons Jenna to her home the next morning to try out for the position.

Chapter 3

Jenna presents herself at Mrs. Gladstone's elegant brownstone, then sets out with the imperious woman on a slightly inept drive to the shoe store.

Chapter 4

After another somewhat inept drive along Lake Shore Drive, Mrs. Gladstone nevertheless announces that she wants to hire Jenna to drive her on a six-week trip to Texas. Along the way, Mrs. Gladstone and Jenna will inspect Gladstone's Shoe stores. In Dallas, at the annual shareholders' meeting, Mrs. Gladstone plans to retire and turn over leadership of the company to her son Elden.

Chapter 5

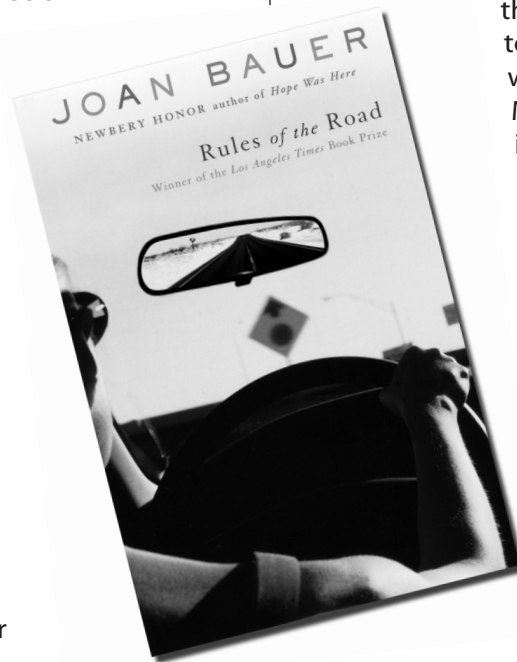
Jenna's mother doesn't approve of the road trip plan. But then late-night drunken phone calls from Dad to Jenna begin, as usual. Jenna pleads to her mother that she has to get out of town, has to get away. Mom agrees.

Chapter 6

Before she leaves, Jenna visits Grandma, as she does every week, and goes through the memory scrapbooks. Jenna also instructs Faith to be sure to make weekly visits while she's gone; Faith is reluctant.

Chapter 7

The road trip begins. First stop—Gladstone's Shoes in Peoria, where Jenna carefully assesses all aspects of the store. Back in the car, she describes for Mrs. Gladstone the many flaws in the store's displays and service. Most troubling is the inferior merchandise, the type of cheaper shoes that Elden favors, which is in direct conflict with the Gladstone's



motto, displayed in each store: we're not just selling shoes, we're selling quality.

Chapter 8

At the next stop, in Springfield, Mrs. Gladstone tells Jenna that Elden has been buying up Gladstone's stock. He's doing this in concert with Ken Woldman, president of the budget-priced chain Shoe Warehouse. The chain will then buy Gladstone's. Mrs. Gladstone is sick at heart that Elden is willing to jettison her long-held insistence on quality. To herself, Jenna compares Elden's careless rejection of his mother with her father's careless rejection of her.

Chapter 9

In Springfield, Jenna scouts out a Shoe Warehouse store, where she helps a harried, money-pinched mother of five select shoes for her brood while the salesman ignores and then tries to cheat the woman.

Chapters 10-12

Mrs. Gladstone has been increasingly troubled by pain in her hip and finally agrees to take pain medication. In St. Louis, she has Jenna consult by phone with legendary shoe salesman Harry Bender of Dallas about a meeting with Elden the next morning. Following the genial Harry's advice, Jenna infuriates the slimy Elden by sweetly insisting repeatedly that his mother is not well enough to see him today.

Chapters 13-14

Next day, retired shoe model Alice Lovett strides into the hotel room. Feisty Alice is a long-time friend of Mrs. Gladstone's and is equally take-charge. Alice makes Mrs. Gladstone start using a wheelchair, and she and Jenna cut short another confrontation with Elden just before the trio sets out for Kansas City. On the road, Jenna recalls her father's skills as a salesman and the dreadful nights when he'd come home drunk.

Chapters 15-16

As the trip continues, Jenna muses as she drives about literal rules of the road she is learning, like don't ever eat at a diner with a sign that says good eats or mom's. Meanwhile, Mrs. Gladstone is regaining her strength. When the trio reaches Mrs. Gladstone's house in a Dallas suburb, Elden pulls in behind them. He and his mother have another

argument about selling the business for a great profit and focusing only on the bottom line rather than quality.

Chapters 17-18

At the Dallas Gladstone's store, Jenna finally meets Harry Bender, who has been working hard to persuade stockholders to vote against the Shoe Warehouse sellout at the annual meeting. Harry is a long-time member of Alcoholics Anonymous; Jenna is grateful to talk with Harry about her father. A letter from Jenna's mother brings back unpleasant memories of Dad.

Chapters 19-20

Alice appoints herself in charge of Jenna's makeover—new haircut, new clothes. For the first time, Jenna is confident about her personal appearance; she even feels like a pretty young woman. At the store, Harry Bender gives Jenna some super-salesperson tips which, like other sales guidelines, also give advice on conducting life in general.

Chapters 21-22

Harry advises Jenna to tell her father how he hurts her even though she cares so much for him. That evening, Mrs. Gladstone gives Jenna fifty shares of Gladstone's stock. Late that night, Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone learn that Harry has been killed in a car accident, hit head-on by a drunk driver. At Harry's burial ceremony, Jenna speaks, saying, "He wasn't afraid of saying the truth . . . he taught me to not be afraid of the darkness."

Chapter 23

Jenna feels empowered now, thanks to Harry's words. She's ready to tell her father how angry she is, that she won't accept his behavior anymore. She also embraces an important rule of the road: "You never know where the road's going to take you. I think sometimes it's less important that you get to your destination than the side trips you take along the way."

Chapters 24-25

Jenna brings Mrs. Gladstone and Alice to the stockholders' meeting. But when Jenna tries to enter, Elden bars her way. He says she is fired, hands her a plane ticket to Chicago, and sends her away. Jenna rebels and returns, insisting on her right as a stockholder to attend. Mrs. Gladstone addresses the

meeting and resigns, saying she will no longer be able to look the customers in the eye. Jenna also speaks, saying she is voting to keep Mrs. Gladstone on with the company in some capacity. When the votes are tallied, a large majority approve the sale to Shoe Warehouse, and a sizable minority vote to keep Mrs. Gladstone involved. Ken Woldman puts her in complete charge of quality control, to Elden's consternation.

Chapter 26

Back in Chicago, Jenna catches up with her family. Faith did visit Grandma weekly. She also endured Dad's late-night drunken phone calls and for the first time understands what Jenna went through and how Jenna protected her. A few days later, Dad finds Jenna and gets her into his car. When she realizes that he's drunk, she stops the car, jumps out, and tells a policewoman that he's driving drunk.

Chapter 27

The next week, Jenna buys her long-planned-for used car—a Chevy Cavalier—and takes Grandma on a promised picnic, where Grandma has a quavering memory of who Jenna is.

Chapter 28

Jenna and her father have a planned meeting at Lincoln Park Zoo. He's upset that he's lost his driver's license. Jenna cuts him off and tells him, "I love you, but I can't be with you unless you change because seeing you so out of control, seeing you wasting your life is too hard for me." Dad continues to insist that he can handle his drinking. Jenna responds, "Please hear me, Dad. If you keep drinking I won't see you, I won't talk to you on the phone. I need a sober father. Faith does too." Jenna's father walks slowly out of the park. Having spoken the truth, Jenna feels the lifting of the crushing burden she had been carrying around for most of her life.

Timeline

June Jenna's father reappears in Chicago; Mrs. Gladstone hires Jenna to be her driver.

ROAD TRIP:

day 1 Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone stop in Peoria, inspect Gladstone's Shoe Store.

days 2-4 Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone stay in Springfield, IL.; Jenna scouts out the local Shoe Warehouse store.

day 5 Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone reach St. Louis.

day 6 Jenna blocks Elden from talking with his mother at the hotel.

next several days Mrs. Gladstone has meeting in her hotel room; Alice Lovett arrives; Elden and Mrs. Gladstone have a brief in-person conversation.

following day Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone, plus Alice, visit the Kansas City Gladstone's store.

next weeks Jenna drives Mrs. Gladstone and Alice through Kansas, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana, visiting Gladstone's stores along the way.

early August Jenna, Mrs. Gladstone, and Alice reach Dallas.

in Dallas Alice gives Jenna a makeover; Harry Bender, Mrs. Gladstone, Alice, and Jenna work to halt the company takeover.

eight days before the company meeting Harry Bender dies in a car accident.

meeting day Jenna speaks in favor of Mrs. Gladstone; shareholders approve the sellout, vote to keep Mrs. Gladstone on with the company.

late August Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone return to Chicago; Jenna has her father arrested for drunk driving, makes her climactic declaration about her future relationship with him.

Author Sketch

Joan Bauer was born in River Forest, Illinois, in 1951, where she grew up, the oldest of four sisters. She was close to her grandmother, a funny professional storyteller who lived with the family. Nana's stories used humor to reveal truths about human nature, a hallmark of Bauer's young adult fiction. As a child, Bauer was always writing stories and poems. As she got older, she began feeling gawky and overly tall, like Jenna in *Rules of the Road*. In her later childhood and teen



years, Bauer had to cope with difficult problems. Her father was an alcoholic, and her parents divorced when she was eight years old. Bauer confronted her father about issues between them shortly before he committed suicide. Her beloved grandmother became afflicted with Alzheimer's disease. Bauer addressed these issues in *Rules of the Road*. She also uses her experiences as a theme in all of her fiction: "adversity, if we let it, will make us stronger." Bauer's protagonists, like the author herself, always use humor in confronting the storms in their lives. As Bauer says, "Humor is a bridge between pain and redemption."

During and after high school, Bauer held a variety of jobs. She worked successfully in sales and marketing for the *Chicago Tribune*, McGraw-Hill, and *Parade Magazine* in her twenties. She married Evan, a computer engineer, in 1981; had a baby, Jean, in 1982; and slowly built a writing career in journalism and then screenwriting. While recovering slowly from a serious automobile accident, Bauer turned to fiction writing, a career she has pursued ever since. Bauer and her family lived in Darien, Connecticut, for many years; she and her husband now live in Brooklyn, New York.

Critic's Corner

Critics have admired Joan Bauer's fiction for young readers since she began to publish. Her first effort, *Squashed*, received the Delacorte Prize for a First Young Adult Novel. Her titles regularly appear on best-book lists, and readers readily identify with her protagonists. *Rules of the Road* won the first *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for Young Adult Fiction and a Golden Kite Award. *School Library Journal* wrote, "The author creates some fabulous and sometimes flamboyant characters, witty dialogue, and memorable scenes, thus making readers really care . . . Bauer's best yet." *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* declared, "Jubilant, strong, and funny, this is a road trip to remember." *Book Report* found the narrative "delightful" and "fast-paced," and the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* praised the "strong, engaging, and believable plot." *Booklist* added, "It's downright wonderful these days to find a teenage protagonist who is smart, moral, funny, confident (mostly), and open-minded about grown-ups."

Other Works by Joan Bauer

Squashed, 1992
Thwunk, 1995
Sticks, 1996
Rules of the Road, 1998
Backwater, 1999
Hope Was Here, 2000
Stand Tall, 2002
Best Foot Forward, 2005 (companion to *Rules of the Road*)

Bibliography

Bauer, Joan, "Humor, Seriously," *The ALAN Review*, Winter 1996
Blasingame, James, "Interview with Joan Bauer," *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, November 2005, pp. 244-45
Contemporary Authors, Vol. 190. Farmington Hills, MI: Gale Group, 2001
Lesesne, Teri, "A Passion for Humor: An Interview with Joan Bauer," *Teacher Librarian*, February 2000, pp. 60ff.
Something About the Author, Vol. 117. Farmington Hills, MI: Gale Group, 2000

Internet

"Bauer, Joan": www.edupaperback.org/
"Joan Bauer": www.joanbauer.com
"Meet the Pros: Joan Bauer":
www.kidbookpros.com/meetthepros/interviews_2000_01/joan_bauer.htm

Reviews of *Rules of the Road*

Booklist, February 1, 1998, p. 910
Book Report, January/February 1999, pp. 58-59
Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, February 1998, pp. 192-93
Horn Book Magazine, May/June 1998, pp. 339-40
Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, May 2000, pp. 781ff
Publishers Weekly, February 23, 1998, pp. 77-78
School Library Journal, March 1998, p. 208.
VOYA, June 1998, p. 120

General Objectives

1. To examine the causes of and consequences of alcohol abuse
2. To explore the impact of an absent parent on the children left behind
3. To consider the ways in which to develop inner strength and self-esteem
4. To discuss the ways in which relationships with older people can enrich younger people's lives
5. To explore the feelings and coping process involved in the loss of a significant person in your life
6. To examine issues of corporate and business ethics

Specific Objectives

1. To understand Jenna's personal and family problems and her need to find ways to deal with them
2. To recognize the benefits, tangible and intangible, that Jenna gains from her job at Gladstone's Shoe Store
3. To identify the reasons for the road trip and understand the philosophical and practical conflict between Mrs. Gladstone and Elden
4. To identify the various rules of the road, both for highway driving and for life's road, that Jenna learns
5. To trace the ways in which Jenna grows and changes in the course of the road trip
6. To discuss the role that the older adult characters play in Jenna's life
7. To interpret the levels of meaning in the novel's title and the metaphors involving shoes
8. To analyze the way in which Jenna uses humor to help her cope with the difficulties and traumas she faces and has to deal with

Literary Terms and Applications

To enhance students' appreciation and understanding of the novel, present these terms:

Coming-of-age novel: a work of fiction in which the main character moves into and/or through adolescence and develops at least the beginnings of maturity. In this novel, sixteen-year-old Jenna

develops self-confidence and self-esteem as she learns how to take charge of and deal with the problems in her life, especially the situation with her alcoholic father.

First-person narration: the telling of a novel or short story from the point of view of only one person. In this novel, Jenna tells about the events of the summer road trip that transforms her in many ways and brings her to a new level of maturity, enriching and lightening her account with her consistent and wry humor.

Metaphor: a comparison between two things that are not literally alike. The title of this book is both literal and metaphorical as Jenna learns and expresses various rules for helping to negotiate the highway of life as well as the actual interstate highways she is driving along. Shoes, too, can be viewed metaphorically as taking us down life's road.

Pun: a humorous play on words that uses a single word with more than one meaning, two similar-sounding words with different meanings, or two words that sound the same but are spelled differently and have different meanings. Bauer sprinkles puns through this novel mostly related to sole/soul: "All he cared about was money, not sole." (p. 57) "If you're in the shoe business, [Mahatma] means Great Sole." (p. 79) "Elden slumped in his chair, soleless." (p. 184) Harry Bender's headstone inscription is also a pun: "he gave it his best shod." (p. 159)

The Importance of Setting

The novel's settings are ever-changing as the road trip progresses and Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone (and later Alice) visit a variety of cities and eat and stay at an array of restaurants and hotels. Main settings include the Gladstone's Shoe Store in Chicago, where Jenna has found herself as a super shoe salesperson with a keen eye for display. Another main setting is the apartment where Jenna lives with her mother and sister, endures her father's drunken late-night phone calls, and breaks down sobbing after having her father arrested for drunk driving. Once on the road, Mrs. Gladstone's Cadillac becomes a rolling setting, as Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone learn much about each other. A critical setting is the board room where the Gladstone's

shareholders' meeting takes place; Jenna asserts her newfound adult persona here as she insists on her right to attend and rallies support for Mrs. Gladstone with her speech. The novel's final scene takes place in Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo by the duck pond, where Jenna finally confronts her father and turns responsibility for his behavior fully over to him.

Cross-Curricular Sources

Fiction

Ann Brashares, *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*
Stephen Chbosky, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*
Pat Derby, *Grams, Her Boyfriend, My Family, and Me*
Jean Ferris, *Love Among the Walnuts*
Kimberly Willis Holt, *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*
Beverly Keller, *The Amazon Papers*
Janet McDonald, *Chill Wind*
Richard Peck, *A Long Way from Chicago*
Barbara Wersba, *Fat: A Love Story and sequels, and Just Be Gorgeous and sequels*
Virginia Euwer Wolff, *Make Lemonade*

Nonfiction

Gilda Berger, *Alcoholism and the Family*
Curtis Casewit, *Summer Adventures*
Elaine Landau, *Alzheimer's Disease*
Rhoda McFarland, *The World of Work: The Lifeskills Library*
Nancy Shuker, *Everything You Need to Know About an Alcoholic Parent*
Margi Trepani, *Inside a Support Group: Help for Teenage Children of Alcoholics*
Beth Wilkinson, *Coping When a Grandparent Has Alzheimer's Disease*

CD-ROM

Hot Dog Stand: Top Dog and Hot Dog Stand: The Works (Sunburst)
Teaching Your Teens to Drive (AAA)
Writer's Workshop I and II (Holt, Rinehart & Winston)

Internet

The Costumer's Manifesto: Shoe Links
www.costumes.org/ADVICE/1pages/shoelinks.htm#History%20of%20Shoes
Driver's Ed Games
driversed.com/
MADD: Jr. & Sr. High
www.madd.org/under21/1107
Quia Driver Education (interactive games to prepare for individual state's driver's license exams)
www.quia.com/de/

SADD: Students Against Destructive Decisions
www.sad.org
Solemates: The Century in Shoes
www.centuryinshoes.com
Teens for Alzheimer's Awareness
www.afateens.org/

Internet Sites for Joan Bauer

Author Profile: Joan Bauer
www.teenreads.com/authors/au-bauer-joan.asp
Bauer, Joan
www.edupaperback.org/showauth.cfm?authid=116
Joan Bauer
www.joanbauer.com
Joan Bauer
www.penguin.ca/nf/Author/AuthorPage/0,,1000038525,00.html
Joan Bauer E-Mail Interview
www.ric.edu/astal/authors/joanbauer.html
Online Chat with Joan Bauer
teenlink.nypl.org/bauer-transcript.html

Video/DVD

Alcohol: Truth and Consequences (Deerfield Productions)
Drunk Driving: The Victim, the Offender (Pyramid Video)
The Forgetting: A Portrait of Alzheimer's (PBS Home Video)
Living a Lie: The Alcoholic Family (Human Relations Media)
The Stock Market—What Goes Up...? (Knowledge Unlimited)

Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in *Rules of the Road* should include these aspects.

Themes

- alcoholism
- family relationships
- absent father
- Alzheimer's disease
- death
- intergenerational family relationships
- business ethics
- honesty
- overcoming adversity
- coming of age
- humor
- loyalty

Motifs

- shoes and sales
- driving and highways

- dangers of drunk driving
- diners and road food
- divorce
- being tall
- mobility using a cane or wheelchair
- shares of stock

Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, or sentences that have a particular meaning in the novel. Explain each as it relates to the book. Use the chapter and page numbers given in parentheses to reread the term in context if you wish.

1. "My keen retailer's eye . . ." (Ch. 1, p. 1)
(Retail is the sale of goods in small amounts directly to customers. A retailer is someone who sells goods at retail. Jenna is expressing her skill at retailing, in this case selling shoes, and also her pride in that skill.)
2. "... corporate offices in Dallas . . ." (Ch. 1, p. 4)
(A corporation may have many branches and subsidiary offices, but it has just one official corporate headquarters. Gladstone's Shoes has retail stores in thirty-seven states, but its corporate headquarters is in Dallas, Texas, the ultimate destination of Mrs. Gladstone's and Jenna's road trip.)
3. "I smiled my indentured servant smile." (Ch. 3, p. 29)
(An indentured servant is a person who has signed a contract to serve a master for a given length of time, usually a number of years. Jenna's comment wryly expresses her sense of being a servant to rather than an employee of the imperious Mrs. Gladstone.)
4. "... the Cadillac tripometer that blinked digital displays that only a graduate from MIT could understand." (Ch. 4, p. 33)
(Like most luxury cars today, Mrs. Gladstone's Cadillac has numerous digital displays about many different functions and conditions of the car. Jenna, being only accustomed to a Honda Accord, wryly comments that it would take an engineering/science graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to be able to read and understand all these displays.)
5. "... handed Mom an itinerary of our trip . . ." (Ch. 7, p. 46)
(An itinerary is a route of a trip, showing starting point, stops along the way, dates, and sometimes other information such as hotels scheduled for overnight stays. Mrs. Gladstone is giving

Jenna's mother a detailed itinerary of their trip with phone numbers and addresses so Mrs. Boller will be reassured that she can contact Jenna on any day in any place.)

6. "... the annual stockholders meeting . . ." (Ch. 4, p. 34)
(A corporation holds a meeting once a year at which holders of the company's stock shares vote on various corporate matters. Stockholders can vote in person or by proxy [in effect, an absentee ballot]. Mrs. Gladstone is going to attend the annual meeting of Gladstone's Shoes in Dallas, where she plans to retire in response to her son Elden's machinations to force her out as president.)
7. "A waitress was pouring Mrs. Butterworth's syrup into a real maple syrup tin" [at the Honest Abe Pancake House]. (Ch. 9, p. 69)
(This underlines the theme of underhanded business ethics. Mrs. Butterworth's contains no real maple syrup, even though "Honest" Abe's fills its "real maple syrup" tins with the ersatz syrup.)
8. "That's one of the things I like about her. She doesn't fight it when the lines blur." (Ch. 17, pp. 129-30)
(Jenna admires Opal's ability not to be rigid about her beliefs or practices, to do what she thinks is really right when she chooses to. In this instance, Opal discards her vegetarianism whenever barbecue is available.)
9. "Is this the wake?" she asked, sarcastically. (Ch. 21, p. 152)
(A wake is a vigil held over a dead body prior to burial. Mrs. Gladstone compares the serious meeting between Harry and Jenna in the stockroom as a wake for the Gladstone's company before the upcoming stockholders meeting that will be the burial of the company via the sellout to Shoe Warehouse.)
10. "Your severance check will be mailed to you." (Ch. 24, p. 171)
(A severance check is payment to an employee on termination of employment, based on length of service. By issuing Jenna a severance check, Elden is acting as if he has the right to determine Jenna's terms of employment even before he has engineered the ouster of his mother as president of the company.)

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important, and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Questions 1-4 (Literal Level)

1. What personal and family problems is Jenna coping with?
(She is unhappy with her personal appearance—she is not happy about being so tall, or about the weight she has gained in the past year; she feels “big, awkward, and lost,” that she’s been “glued together with surplus parts.” Her alcoholic father’s periodic but utterly unpredictable reappearances always trigger chaos in the lives of Jenna, her mother, and her sister. While her father is in town, Jenna agonizes over the late-night drunken phone calls, public embarrassments, and her heightened emotional conflict about her feelings toward her father. In addition, Jenna’s beloved Grandma is in a nursing home, with Alzheimer’s disease stripping her of her memories.)
2. What benefits does Jenna gain through her job at Gladstone’s Shoes?
(She gets a much-needed sense of success from her job. She earns money—by summer’s end, she hopes to be able to buy herself a used car. She doesn’t feel “big, awkward, and lost” at Gladstone’s. She gets respect and admiration at the store, from her boss and from her legions of satisfied customers. She helps her customers, and they appreciate it. She functions as a confident, skilled professional in her workplace.)
3. What is the purpose of the road trip?
(Mrs. Gladstone needs to travel from Chicago to Dallas to attend the annual shareholders’ meeting of Gladstone’s Shoe Company. She is also going to stop along the way at various Gladstone’s Shoe stores to check on the quality of the merchandise and service. She is especially concerned about the future of her company under her son Elden. Because of her painful hip, Mrs. Gladstone can’t drive herself, so she hires Jenna to do the driving. Additionally, Mrs. Gladstone has observed Jenna’s shoe-selling skills and plans to have Jenna help assess the Gladstone’s Shoe stores they visit along the way.)
4. What are some of the literal rules of the road for road trips that Jenna learns and describes?
(Don’t ever eat at a place called Mom’s or with a “good eats” sign—the food will be awful. You’ll most likely get a good meal at a diner with four or more pickups parked outside. Every driver

on the road thinks she or he is driving well, even if they’re not. Some people still do help fellow travelers on the road. In Texas, everyone drives faster. Pull over to the right and let tailgaters pass. Taking a road trip can make you feel distanced from your problems.)

Questions 5-8 (Interpretive Level)

5. What are some of the rules of the road for life that Jenna learns and describes?
(Jenna imagines road signs on the highway of life that resemble real road signs: caution: jerks crossing; blinking yellow lights when you’re about to do something stupid; stop signs in front of people who could hurt you; green lights shining when you’re doing the right thing. It’s honorable to stand up for ethics and quality in business dealings. True beauty radiates outward when you feel good about yourself inside. Caring about people is the greatest secret of success; the small moments when you can touch another person make the difference in life. You never know where the road of life is going to take you; it’s often less important to get to your destination than to take the sidetrips along the way. You can’t let people do anything they like to you and not object; you have to tell them how you feel about this, express your anger, refuse to accept the bad treatment any longer. In the midst of sadness and pain, remembering the good things keeps you going.)
6. How does Jenna grow and change in the course of the road trip?
(She learns a lot about herself and other people’s characters and gains an appreciation for the insights and feistiness of older people. She learns to recognize betrayal and greed, and she gains a deeper appreciation for loyalty and providing fine service to others. She gains the strength and understanding to confront her father, refuse to accept his alcoholic behavior any longer, and therefore resolve her emotional conflict about her feelings toward him. She realizes that she can use her strengths to make choices and exert some control over her life. She gains self-confidence in her physical appearance and from her speaking out at Harry’s burial and at the board meeting and from defying Elden; when she returns to Chicago, she radiates a new adult persona.)
7. What role do the older adult characters—Grandma, Mrs. Gladstone, Alice, Harry Bender—play in Jenna’s life?
(When Jenna faces a difficult or puzzling situation, she recalls one of Grandma’s many wise sayings that relates to the present situation and uses that as a guide to her action or reaction. Mrs. Gladstone and Alice provide role models for Jenna of the independent, feisty, active, competent, wise, witty, and accomplished senior woman. Harry Bender serves as a shoe-selling mentor, imparting gems of advice, and he also becomes a father figure

to Jenna who empowers her to confront the problem with her real father directly and thus take control of the situation instead of letting the situation control her.)

8. Compare Mrs. Gladstone's and Elden's approaches to business.
(Mrs. Gladstone and her husband founded their company on the concept of quality and customer service. They have always employed well-trained salespeople to sell quality footwear at fair prices. Elden, on the other hand, cares nothing for quality or service. He believes in selling indifferently or poorly made footwear at budget prices to generate volume and greater profit; he thinks it's fine to offer this type of merchandise under the banner of Gladstone's emphasis on quality. He has engineered the sellout of Gladstone's behind his mother's back, which he considers a perfectly acceptable business tactic. Elden is all for the bottom line, and for getting rich via the company sellout.)

Questions 9-10 (Critical Level)

9. In what ways is the title *Rules of the Road* both literal and symbolic?
*(As noted in Literal Question #4 above, Jenna discovers some literal rules of the road for road trips as the journey progresses. Jenna also finds rules for the highway of life during her trip. Mrs. Gladstone tells Jenna that her daddy the preacher "always said that shoes take us along life's pathways, they get all muddied up, all scratched from wear. We've got to clean them up, take care of them." Bauer has also spoken about the "metaphor of shoes taking us down life's road." Jenna's mother always tells her daughters that the best way to get to know someone is to walk around in their shoes [the same advice Atticus Finch gives Scout in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, one of Joan Bauer's favorite books when she was growing up].)*
10. In what ways does the author, through Jenna's voice, use humor in this novel?
(Answers will vary somewhat. The author uses Jenna's humor to lighten the messages about the life lessons Jenna learns on her journey, and her struggles to deal with the adverse aspects of her life. The author has used humor in this way in her own life to deal with issues similar to those that Jenna has to work through. Bauer has written, "I work in humor because I believe that humorous books teach young people to use laughter against the storms of life. Humor is a survival tool." She adds, "To me, using humor in life illustrates that the person or character has moved from seeing life as a series of problems or things done to them, and has moved into greater clarity and control of a situation." [Quotes are from The Alan Review; see Bibliography.]

Questions 11-13 (Creative Level)

11. As Mrs. Gladstone, write a series of journal entries focused on Jenna. Describe your observations of Jenna as she works the floor at Gladstone's Shoes in Chicago, your thoughts about hiring Jenna to be your driver, your reactions to the early outings in the Cadillac with Jenna behind the wheel, and your decision to offer Jenna the job.
12. As Jenna, write a series of letters home to Mom and Faith describing aspects of your road trip with Mrs. Gladstone and, later, Alice as well.
13. Predict how subsequent events will turn out for Mrs. Gladstone, Gladstone's Shoes, and Jenna as Assistant to the Director of Quality Control.

Across the Curriculum

Science

- Jenna describes learning about hydroplaning in driver's ed. class. Create a poster or multimedia presentation that shows and explains the forces involved in hydroplaning and its effect on a car.
- Create a diagram of the human foot with all of its bones labeled, plus major muscles and ligaments.

Health

- Research and report on the process of hip replacement. Be sure to include illustrations in your report.
- Jenna says that her boss, Murray Castlebaum, has attacks of diverticulitis that turn him into Frankenbaum. What is diverticulitis, and why would it have this effect on Murray? Research, and then explain.
- Jenna's Grandma has Alzheimer's disease. Research and report on the causes, effects, and treatment of this disease. Also discuss its effects on family members and caretakers.

Language Arts

1. Read about the life of author Joan Bauer. Then explain what aspects of her life experiences are reflected in Jenna's life.
2. Read other novels written by Joan Bauer. Compare shared elements of these novels, such as characteristics of the protagonist, themes, and plot.
3. Joan Bauer, the author of this novel, often uses similes and metaphors to make her writing more vivid and interesting. Here are two examples: "Mrs. Gladstone was glaring at me like a vulture who'd just seen mouse meat." "It didn't help that Elden was pond scum." Try your hand and write some vivid similes and metaphors about some familiar things in your life.
4. Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone are distinct characters. With classmates, brainstorm a list of adjectives that are descriptive of Jenna, and brainstorm a second adjective list for Mrs. Gladstone.
5. Jenna often sums up an incident in terms of a possible news headline, such as Daring Duck Beats Odds to Win. Write some news headlines of your own for other incidents in the novel. Share headlines with classmates, and try to guess which incident each headline refers to.
6. Author Joan Bauer sprinkles this novel with puns related to shoes. Find at least two of these. Then write your own puns about a subject of your choice.

Geography

1. On a map of Chicago, locate as many of the places mentioned in the novel as you can. Note what part each place plays in the novel.
2. On a map of the United States, trace the route of Jenna's and Mrs. Gladstone's road trip.

Mathematics

1. Using your map from the geography activity above, calculate the distances Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone travel on their road trip. Calculate both total distance and the distances between stops along the way.

2. Jenna earns a 5 percent commission on each pair of shoes she sells. Go to a shoe store, pick out at least five pairs of shoes of different types, and then calculate how much Jenna's (or your) commission would be for selling these shoes.
3. Track the price over a period of time of a share of stock in a company that produces a product or offers a service that interests you. Suppose you initially purchased fifty shares of this stock. How much would you have gained or lost over the selected period of time?
4. Jenna learns from her research that Shoe Warehouse stock went from ten dollars a share up to forty-one dollars. How much money would you have earned if you bought fifty shares at the starting price?
5. Calculate the value of Jenna's fifty shares of Gladstone's stock from the day she received the stock in Chapter 21 through the changes in stock price mentioned in Chapter 23. What do you think Shoe Warehouse paid Gladstone's stockholders for each share of their stock after the sale was approved?

Art

1. Create illustrations of Jenna, Mrs. Gladstone, Elden, and any other characters from the novel. Either draw your own, or find illustrations in the media that fit your mental image of what these characters may look like.
2. Draw a floor plan of an effective Gladstone's Shoe Store, laid out according to Jenna's criteria.
3. Create your version of the Gladstone's Shoes star symbol that is described in Chapter 1 of the novel.

Social Studies

1. Research and report on the U.S. Interstate Highway System. Explain its origins, its growth, and how it is managed today. Include a map of the complete system as part of your report.
2. Research and report on either Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or Alateen, the organization

for teenagers. How might you think AA could help Jenna's father, or Alateen help Jenna?

3. Create a tourist brochure or multimedia tourist presentation for one of the towns Jenna visits on her trip—for example, Springfield, IL, St. Louis, MO, or Dallas, TX. Make your destination seem as interesting, fun, and entertaining as possible.

Music

Mrs. Gladstone loves to listen to the big-band music of the World War II era on her car radio. Jenna's not so crazy about it. Play recordings of this big-band music in class and discuss your responses to it with classmates.

Student Involvement Activities

1. Jenna's history teacher asked his students to write an essay about "The things the United States will be remembered for?" What things would you list? Share lists with classmates.
2. Jenna talks sometimes about her best friend Opal. Describe your own best friend, and explain what this friendship means to you. Why do you think you are best friends?
3. List the jobs you have done to earn money, and describe each one. If you want to, you can also say how much you earned from each job.
4. Plan your own summer road trip. Choose a destination and any stops along the way. Map your trip route and calculate daily mileages. Determine a budget for gas, food, lodging, and miscellaneous expenses like admissions. Decide what to bring with you.
5. Make your favorite type of grilled cheese sandwich. If possible, do this while other classmates are making theirs, then share and decide which versions are the favorites.
6. Jenna's grandmother is a stable influence in her life. Describe the stable influences in your life.

7. Create a class display—real or virtual—of the various types of shoes that Jenna sells and wears. Be sure to label each pair and note its particular qualities.
8. Create a handbook on how to be a good shoe salesperson, following the guidelines Jenna offers in the course of the novel.
9. Individually or with classmates, create a booklet of Jenna's grandmother's wise sayings.

Alternate Assessment

1. Draw up a detailed character list for the novel under two headings, major characters and minor characters. List each character's name, give a brief character description (for those you have enough information about), and tell what role she or he plays in Jenna's life.
2. In outline form, trace each leg of Jenna's and Mrs. Gladstone's road trip, from its beginning in Illinois to its destination in Texas. Tell briefly who is part of the action and what happens at each stop.
3. Author Joan Bauer has described both herself and Jenna as "overcomers." Explain how this is or is not true of Jenna.
4. In what ways could Jenna serve as a role model for you? Explain.
5. At the end of the novel, Jenna says, "Now I see that it isn't the problems along the way that make us or break us. It's how we learn to stand and face them that makes the difference." Explain specifically how this applies to Jenna, or to yourself.
6. Author Richard Peck has said that a young adult coming-of-age book must "end at a beginning." How do you think this comment applies to *Rules of the Road*?

Vocabulary

Match each underlined word with its meaning listed below. Write the letter of the meaning in the space next to the sentence number.

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| A. crowds | F. dull, stale remarks | K. with caution | P. disgraceful |
| B. shabby | G. of dreadful quality | L. verbal abuse | Q. dishonesty |
| C. flinched | H. happening at night | M. like a queen | R. huge thing |
| D. shamed | I. stern in manner | N. very simple | S. break up |
| E. strolled | J. able to be heard | O. firm spirit | T. disregarded |

- ___ 1. "Oh, Jenna, you must have been mortified!"
- ___ 2. The protective chain and fence protected the store from nocturnal shoe thugs.
- ___ 3. I eased the behemoth car inside.
- ___ 4. "I need someone who has a rudimentary understanding of the shoe business."
- ___ 5. "Yes," Mom said guardedly. "She is."
- ___ 6. Mrs. Gladstone stood regally by the car door and rapped her cane on the floor.
- ___ 7. "He says I should relax, enjoy life, get a condo in Florida." She winced.
- ___ 8. For an old person, she had grit.
- ___ 9. "You defied me," Mrs. Gladstone said.
- ___ 10. "You've got to diffuse the situation, because that boy's coming to town with bad news for sure."
- ___ 11. Elden stomped off in a stinking cloud of deceit.
- ___ 12. Mrs. Gladstone reared up. "Their merchandise is atrocious!"
- ___ 13. I bought the magazine, sauntered out.
- ___ 14. You couldn't tell at first that she was getting better, her being so gruff and all.
- ___ 15. Mrs. Gladstone and Alice weren't going to take any guff.
- ___ 16. I drove on, yielding to the hordes of speeding drivers.
- ___ 17. "Elden, you have been dishonest, disreputable, and devious."
- ___ 18. Mrs. Gladstone rammed her cane on the floor. "I don't need platitudes!"
- ___ 19. There was an audible gasp as Mrs. Gladstone sat down.
- ___ 20. Elden said something mangy about his mother's great contributions to the shoe industry.

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Read each character description. In the list below, find the character who matches the description. Write the letter of the character in the space next to the description number. You will use each name only once.

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------|-----------------|
| A. Jenna | E. Mrs. Gladstone | H. Grandma |
| B. Faith | F. Elden Gladstone | I. Harry Bender |
| C. Mom | G. Ken Woldman | J. Alice Lovett |
| D. Dad | | |

- ___ 1. He sped off the elevator, pushing through the lobby like he owned it, talking angrily on a cell phone.
- ___ 2. She was always bent over her Singer sewing machine, bright fabric everywhere.
- ___ 3. She's an emergency-room nurse and is working the night shift for the time and a half pay.
- ___ 4. She stood regally in the hall, wearing a trench coat and a hat with a feather; she leaned on a cane.
- ___ 5. She was beautiful beyond knowing—blonde, green-eyed, finely cut cheekbones.
- ___ 6. The man was a shoe legend. He sold more shoes each year than the number two, three, four, and five ranking salespeople combined.
- ___ 7. He had a tanned, rich, smiling face—a face that said: Worship me. I know about money.
- ___ 8. Felt glued together with surplus parts, with big and boxy shoulders and long and skinny legs.
- ___ 9. He came in wearing dirty jeans and an old golf shirt and grubby sneakers.
- ___ 10. She knocked on the door like someone using a brick and shook hands hard.

Part II: Fill-In (30 points)

Write one or two words in each blank to make each statement true.

- Jenna works at _____ Store.
- The stockholders' meeting takes place in the city of _____.
- Jenna has a driver's license issued by the state of _____.
- _____ Castlebaum is Jenna's boss at the store.
- At 5'11" inches, Jenna thinks she is too _____.
- Jenna hates that her father is a(n) _____, which he refuses to admit.
- Jenna's Grandma lives at the Shady Oaks _____.
- Mrs. Gladstone tells Jenna that she plans to _____ from her business at the stockholders' meeting.
- The slogan of Mrs. Gladstone's company is we're not just selling shoes, we're selling _____.
- The store run by Harry Bender features the world's largest plastic _____.
- Mrs. Gladstone gets very grumpy when Jenna, Alice, and the doctor insist that she has to use a(n) _____.
- Jenna thinks of _____ as "pond scum" and a "Shoe Rodent."
- Jenna does the Texas _____ with a good-looking stranger.
- Harry Bender is killed in an accident caused by a(n) _____.
- At the end of the novel, Jenna meets and talks with her father at the Lincoln Park _____.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III. Multiple Choice (20 points)

Underline the choice that correctly completes each of these sentences.

1. In Chicago, Mrs. Gladstone lives in a (**hotel suite, ranch house, studio apartment, brownstone**).
2. Mrs. Gladstone hires Jenna to be her (**secretary, driver, shoe model, health aide**).
3. Jenna often thinks about the many pieces of advice for life that this person gave her: (**Grandma, Granddad, Dad, Aunt Millie**).
4. Mrs. Gladstone tells Jenna they will be gone on the road trip for (**two weeks, one month, six weeks, two months**).
5. Jenna fondly remembers visits to her Grandma's home in (**California, Wisconsin, Texas, Maine**).
6. After her first year of selling shoes, Jenna received this award, with her initials on it: (**key chain, leather shoes, wristwatch, shoehorn**).
7. Jenna gets in to the locked-door meeting because she is a(n) (**employee, prized salesperson, shareholder, shoe spy**).
8. The used car that Jenna buys is a (**Chevy Cavalier, Toyota Accord, Volvo, VW Cabrio**).
9. Jenna discovers that everyone in Texas drives (**slower, more carefully, faster, without licenses**).
10. Jenna excels at making this kind of sandwich: (**BLT, grilled cheese, club, fried egg**).

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. In what ways has Jenna been conflicted about her relationship with and her feelings about her father?
2. What life lessons does the art of selling shoes offer?
3. What does Jenna learn from her much older role models during the road trip?

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Read each quotation. Find the character who speaks the words in the list below. Write the letter of the character in the space next to the quotation number. You will use each name only once.

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| A. Jenna | E. Mrs. Gladstone | H. Opal Kincaid |
| B. Faith | F. Elden Gladstone | I. Harry Bender |
| C. Dad | G. Ken Woldman | J. Alice Lovett |
| D. Grandma | | |

- ____ 1. "You just remember, never go punching a man who's chewing tobacco."
- ____ 2. "And now, young woman, how much experience have you had driving in storms?"
- ____ 3. "Jenna girl! You got tall there."
- ____ 4. "I need to get out of here. I need to go to Texas."
- ____ 5. "Now I'm a numbers man, and numbers don't lie. There's room in this company for both kinds of shoe stores."
- ____ 6. "I never knew what you had to go through, Jenna. I never understood how you protected me."
- ____ 7. "I was the lead hairstylist at the Queen for a Day Beauty Salon and Nail Emporium for seven years before I went into shoe modeling."
- ____ 8. "What matters is the bottom line. How much you make. What the company's worth."
- ____ 9. "I don't remember things like I used to. I would like to remember you more."
- ____ 10. "She's a bonafide Hansel and Gretel-eating witch! We're talking here, Jenna, about the ultimate summer from hell!"

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

Write a one- or two-word answer to each of the following questions.

- Who is the author of this novel? _____
- What city do Jenna, her mother, and her sister live in? _____
- What state is Jenna driving Mrs. Gladstone to? _____
- What is the symbol of Gladstone's Shoe Stores? _____
- What color is Jenna's hair? _____
- What make of car does Mrs. Gladstone own? _____
- What disease does Jenna's grandmother have? _____
- What event is Mrs. Gladstone traveling to attend? _____
- What part of her body causes Mrs. Gladstone a lot of pain during the road trip?

- What budget-priced chain is taking over Gladstone's? _____
- What organization has Harry Bender been a member of for 23 years? _____
- Who does the newspaper headline "Wall Street shoe baron" refer to? _____
- What gift does Mrs. Gladstone give Jenna before the meeting? _____
- What offense does Jenna cause her father to be arrested for? _____
- What will Mrs. Gladstone be in charge of in the new company? _____

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Underline the choice that correctly completes each of these sentences.

1. In Dallas, Mrs. Gladstone lives in a (**brownstone, hotel suite, ranch house, studio apartment**).
2. Faith has ambitions to become a (**fashion model, nurse, shoe salesperson, basketball star**).
3. For many years Jenna's Grandma ran a (**shoe store, butcher shop, liquor store, tailor shop**).
4. In Grandma's room at the nursing home, Jenna has put up a (**calendar, memory board, happy face, mirror**).
5. Because of her physical problem, Mrs. Gladstone uses this walking aid: (**crutch, walker, cane, leg brace**).
6. Jenna's father was a very good (**salesman, actor, accountant, doctor**).
7. Before driving Mrs. Gladstone's expensive car, Jenna had only driven a (**Corvette, Chevy Tahoe, Lincoln, Honda**).
8. When she gets home, Jenna takes Grandma on / to a (**movie, picnic, fabric store, hospital**).
9. In the novel's last scene, Jenna feeds bread to the (**bears, squirrels, ducks, fish**).
10. When the novel opens, Jenna has had this precious item for six months: (**driver's license, library card, used car, class ring**).

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. In what ways has Jenna changed when she gets home from the road trip?
2. What is the conflict between Mrs. Gladstone and her son Elden? How does each of them achieve part of their objective?
3. What are some of the rules of the road—literally and figuratively—that Jenna learns in the course of her road trip?

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

- | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 6. M | 11. Q | 16. A |
| 2. H | 7. C | 12. G | 17. P |
| 3. R | 8. O | 13. E | 18. F |
| 4. N | 9. T | 14. I | 19. J |
| 5. K | 10. S | 15. L | 20. B |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. I |
| 2. H | 7. G |
| 3. C | 8. A |
| 4. E | 9. D |
| 5. B | 10. J |

Part II: Fill-In (30 points)

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. Gladstone's Shoe | 9. quality |
| 2. Dallas | 10. foot |
| 3. Illinois | 11. wheelchair |
| 4. Murray | 12. Elden (Gladstone) |
| 5. tall | 13. two-step (line dance, country dance) |
| 6. alcoholic | 14. drunk driver |
| 7. Nursing Home | 15. Zoo |
| 8. retire | |

Part III: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. brownstone | 6. shoehorn |
| 2. driver | 7. shareholder |
| 3. Grandma | 8. Chevy Cavalier |
| 4. six weeks | 9. faster |
| 5. Wisconsin | 10. grilled cheese |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. I | 6. B |
| 2. E | 7. J |
| 3. C | 8. F |
| 4. A | 9. D |
| 5. G | 10. H |

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

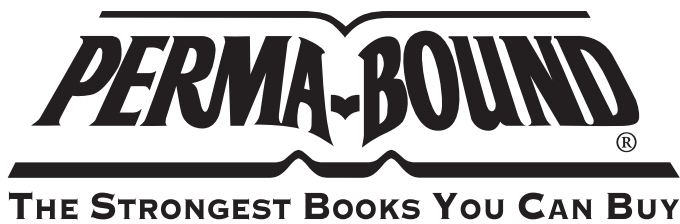
- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Joan Bauer | 9. hip/leg |
| 2. Chicago | 10. Shoe Warehouse |
| 3. Texas | 11. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) |
| 4. Texas Lone Star | 12. Ken Woldman |
| 5. red | 13. stock shares |
| 6. Cadillac | 14. drunk driving |
| 7. Alzheimer's disease | 15. quality control |
| 8. stockholder's meeting | |

Part III: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. ranch house | 6. salesman |
| 2. fashion model | 7. Honda |
| 3. tailor shop | 8. picnic |
| 4. memory board | 9. ducks |
| 5. cane | 10. driver's license |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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